1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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623 562 a good deal of influence in connection with quarrels either of individuals or of local groups.

756 There are certain men, and possibly sometimes women, who have an influence over their fellows owing to their being credited with the possession of supernatural powers. These men, called in *Aka-Jeru oko-jumu* (literally "one who speaks from dreams"), will be described in a later chapter. As they are believed to have command over the powers that produce and cure sickness everyone tries to be on good terms with them, avoiding giving them offence in any way, and seeking their favour by presents of food or other things. It sometimes happens that a chief (the leading man of a local group) is at the same time a medicine-man or *oko-jumu*, but the two positions are entirely distinct and separate, and a man may be a medicine-man who possesses none of the qualities that are necessary for a head man.

673 There does not appear to have been in the Andamans any such thing as the punishment of crime. We may distinguish two kinds of anti-social actions which are regarded by the natives as being wrong. The first kind are those actions which injure in some way a private individual. The second are those, which, while they do not injure any particular person, are yet regarded with disapproval by the society in general.

Amongst the anti-social actions of the first kind are murder, or wounding, theft and adultery, and wilful damage of the property of another.

578 627 682 152 No case of one Andamanese killing another has occurred in recent years. Quarrels sometimes occur between two men of the same camp. A good deal of hard swearing goes on, and sometimes one of the men will work himself up to a high pitch of anger, in which he may seize his bow and discharge an arrow near to the one who has offended him, or may vent his ill-temper by destroying any property that he can lay his hands on, including not only that of his enemy but also that of other persons and even his own. At such a display of anger the women and children flee into the jungle in terror, and if the angry man be at all a formidable person the men occasionally do the same. It apparently requires more courage than the natives usually possess to endeavour to allay such a storm of

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anger. Yet I found that the slightest show of authority would immediately bring such a scene to an end. A man of influence in his village was probably generally equal to the task of keeping order and preventing any serious damage from taking place. It was probably rare for a man so far to give way to his anger as to kill his opponent.

Such murders did, however, occasionally take place[1]. The murderer would, as a rule, leave the camp and hide himself in the jungle, where he might be joined by such of his friends as were ready to take his part. It was left to the relatives and friends of the dead man to exact vengeance if they wished and if they could. If the murderer was a man who was much feared it is probable that he would escape. In any case the anger of the Andamanese is short-lived, and if for a few months he could keep out of the way of those who might seek revenge, it is probable that at the end of that time he would find their anger cooled.

A man who is liable to outbursts of violent anger is feared by his fellows, and unless he has other counterbalancing qualities, he is never likely to become popular. He is treated with outward respect, for every one is afraid of offending him, but he never acquires the esteem of others. There is a special nickname, *Tarenjek*, in the North Andaman, to denote such a man[2].

Quarrels were more likely to occur at the meetings of different local groups that took place in the fine weather, and such quarrels might occasionally end in the murder of some one. In such a case the quarrel would be taken up by the group

[1] The natives of the North Andaman were able to tell me of a few cases of murder which had occurred within the memory of those still living.

Mr Portman in his *History of Our Relations with the Andamanese* records a certain number of murders which occurred while he was in charge of the Andamanese. One man, who had been imprisoned at Port Blair for murder, committed another soon after his release and was hanged. Since that date there has been no case of murder among the Great Andaman tribes. This is perhaps in part due to the punishment with which they are now threatened by the Government, but another cause is probably the breakdown of the old social organisation which has in this respect rather improved their morals than the opposite.

[2] The nickname is applied, however, not only to those who deserve it by their character, but also to others; for instance, one man was called *Tarenjek* because his maternal uncle was a man of violent temper.

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628 of the murdered man, and a feud would be set up between them and the local group to which the murderer belonged. Such was
682 one of the common causes of origin of the petty warfare that formerly existed in the Andamans, which will be referred to later in the present chapter.

627 Cases of theft seem to have been rare. It was left to the aggrieved person to take vengeance upon the thief, but if he
685 killed him or seriously wounded him he would have to expect the possible vengeance of the relatives and friends. Adultery
627 was regarded as a form of theft. I gathered that a man had the right to punish his wife for unfaithfulness, but if the punishment
684 were too severe it would be an occasion for a quarrel with her relatives. It was difficult for the aggrieved husband to punish the man who had offended against him. If he killed him he would lay himself open to the revenge of the relatives. The most he could do was to vent his anger in violent words.

578 Women also occasionally quarrel with one another and swear forcibly at one another, or even get so far as to destroy one
626 another's belongings, or to fight with their fists or sticks. The men hesitate to interfere, and the quarrel can only be stopped by some woman of influence.

The frequent occurrence of serious quarrels is prevented both by the influence of the older men and by the fear that everyone has of the possible vengeance of others should he in any way offend them.

183 There are a number of actions which, while they do not offend any particular person, are regarded as being anti-social.
626 One of these is laziness. Every man is expected to take his proper share in providing both himself and others with food. Should a man shirk this obligation, nothing would be said to him, unless he were a young unmarried man, and he would still be given food by others, but he would find himself occupying a position of inferiority in the camp, and would entirely lose the esteem of his fellows. Other qualities or actions that result in a similar loss of esteem are marital unfaithfulness, lack of respect to others and particularly to elders, meanness or niggardliness, and bad temper. One man was mentioned to me as being a bad man because he refused to take a wife after he had

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confessed that it is tacitly understood that an equivalent should be rendered for every gift.

11. Like the Papuans they are merry, talkative, petulant, inquisitive, and restless. Their speech is rapid, with a constant repetition of the same idea, and a joke, if not played in too practical a form, is highly appreciated.

12. When out of temper with any one they never defame his relatives or use improper expressions, as is so common a practice among natives of India, but merely indulge in mild terms of abuse, such as the following:—

ngab-ted·inga tâ·paya ! (You liar !)
ngūn-kâ·maya ! (You duffer !)
ngūn-jā·bagya ! or *ng'ab-mūgutigpī·chaya !* (You fool !)
ngī-chô·na ! (You long head !)
ngig-chô·ronga-lâ·nta ! (You long nose !)
ngig-pâ·namaya ! (You sunken-eyed one !)
ngid-kī·nabya ! or *ngī-gō·robya !* (You skin and bone !)

A quarrel, as may be supposed, generally results from this style of address.[1]

13. With the exception of those who have lived with us away from their friends from birth or early childhood, not a case can be cited in which a preference is not manifested for a jungle life, even after a sojourn of many years at the Orphanage or Homes at Port Blair.

14. Opportunities for comparing the mental capacity of the children with those of other races have been few, but these have tended to show that, up to the age of 12 or 14, they possess quite as much intelligence as ordinary middle-class children of civilised races when competing in subjects in which they have been instructed in common; but the precociousness of intellect which has so often been remarked in the very young does not appear to be long maintained. Dr. Brander, who was for some time in charge of the Andaman Hospital, gave it as his opinion, that as a race "they are not deficient in brain power; it rather lies dormant and unused in their savage state;" and he mentions the case of an aboriginal patient of 12 years of age, who had been educated in the Ross Orphanage School, and who, in spite of his tender years, could yet read English and Urdu fluently, as well as speak and write in both these languages, retaining also a knowledge of his mother tongue. He had, besides, acquired a fair knowledge of arithmetic. I may add that this is not an exceptional case, for I could instance others, and one lad in particular, who was his superior.

15. More lengthened observations than have hitherto been

[1] *Vide post* "Laws," paragraph 1.

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at Port Blair for the murder of one of his countrymen. He had previously, in 1878, been sentenced to imprisonment for the murder of two children of his tribe, and he committed his last crime soon after his discharge. This has hitherto been the only occasion on which any of these savages has suffered the extreme penalty of British law. It may be added, that this last step was not taken until the unhappy wretch, as well as all his fellow-countrymen in South Andaman, had been repeatedly warned that no other than a capital sentence would in future be passed on those convicted of murder.

4. It is by no means an uncommon occurrence for a man, or even a boy, to vent his ill-temper, or show his resentment at any act, by destroying his own property as well as that of his neighbours, sparing only the things belonging exclusively to the chief, or other head man. The amount of damage done at such times, to canoes and other articles of more or less value, will often give occasion for several weeks' employment in repairing and replacing to himself and his companions; but as these outbreaks are looked upon as the result of a temporary "possession," and the victim considered, for the time being, dangerous, and unaccountable for his actions, no one ventures to offer any opposition, or impose any restraint upon him.

5. Women, when in a rage, occasionally act in a similar manner towards one of their own sex, or even to all the females of the encampment, injuring or destroying their nets, baskets, and other articles; at other times they will seize a burning log, and, banging it furiously on the ground, vent their feelings by some such exclamation as *ngig mūgu jābagike!* (May your face become hideous!); or they will struggle and fight till they are forcibly separated by the wife or daughter of their head man. They do not, however, attempt to settle their differences with the stronger sex, but leave it to their husbands or male relatives to obtain redress for their real or fancied grievances.

6. When a chief or elder so far forgets himself as to lose his temper, those of his own standing betake themselves to their huts, while the other members of the community, male and female, beat a hasty retreat to some secluded spot, for no one would venture to find fault with one in authority, and with some reason, for little or no harm usually results to the community, while his own reputation is sure to suffer. Should he, however, wantonly cause loss or injury to any of his people, they would be pretty certain to take an early, though secret, opportunity of repaying him in kind.

Crime.—1. That outcome of civilisation, suicide, is unknown among them; but, since they have seen cases of self-murder among the alien population, they have coined a lengthy com

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619 neighbouring tribe, an express invitation or permission is required,
486 unless, indeed, the party entering happens to be accompanied by one or more members of the district visited, or when, from long and friendly intercommunication, a right of way has been tacitly sanctioned. In cases where there has been a breach of this observance sharp retribution has generally followed, causing sometimes serious loss of life, and resulting in a long-standing tribal feud.

619 3. Those communities of *ē·rem-tâ·ga-* and *àryô·to-*, living
● 578 within a few miles of each other and speaking the same dialect, arrange from time to time large gatherings—generally numbering
437 about a hundred persons[1]—for purposes of barter, or for the celebration of some particular event. Though not unfrequently on these occasions old enmities are healed and friendships formed, fresh tribal feuds and personal quarrels sometimes originate in consequence of a misunderstanding or dispute over some comparative trifle.[2]

487 4. There are numerous paths intersecting each territory, the result of continuous traffic over the same ground. When, for some reason, a new course is taken through the jungle, the route is indicated to those following by bending the twigs of the brushwood in a *reverse* direction at intervals along the track. This is especially the case during the dry season, when, owing to the parched condition of the soil, there is some difficulty in distinguishing footprints.[3]

212 5. No marks on rocks, trees or other objects, made for purposes of record, are believed by them to exist, and, with the exception of the supposititious hieroglyphics,[4] hereafter to be mentioned, nothing of the nature of writing is to be found among these tribes, nor have they any method of recording the name and exploits of a deceased chief or other individual who may have gained distinction during his life, save the narration —more or less garbled—of the same by their admiring descendants. The messenger who conveys intelligence to a distant encampment bears no outward token with him to testify to the authenticity or character of the communication he has to make.

211 6. Although no method of signs exists, such as tying knots in
411 a string, making notches in a tally, or figures on wood, bark, or stone, they have means of distinguishing arrows and spears belonging to one another, by certain differences peculiar to each

[1] It is believed that no larger number than 300 has ever been assembled at one time in any place in our vicinity, at least since our advent.

[2] *Vide post* "Games and Amusements," paragraphs 24 and 37.

[3] No prejudice exists in respect to crossing water, going by certain paths, or handling particular objects, excepting the *Anadendrum paniculatum*. *Vide post*, Part III, "String," paragraph 3.

[4] *Vide* "Mythology," paragraph 29.

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437 431 5. They set no fixed value on their various properties, and rarely make or procure anything with the express object of disposing of it in barter. Apparently they prefer to regard their transactions as presentations, for their mode of negociating is to *give* such objects as are desired by another in the hope of receiving in return something for which they have expressed a wish, it being tacitly understood that, unless otherwise mentioned beforehand, no "present" is to be accepted without an equivalent being rendered.

[578] 6. The natural consequence of this system is that most of the quarrels which so frequently occur among them originate in failure on the part of the recipient in making such a return as had been confidently expected.[1]

7. All iron-pointed weapons, tools, or shell ornaments are eagerly accepted by the *ē'rem-tā'ga-* in exchange for such things as are more easily procured by them than by the *dryō'to-*:[2] for instance, an adze would generally be considered worth two ordinary bows, or a bundle of wooden-pointed arrows; or a man might undertake to make a canoe or bucket for one who would give him an adze.

428 422 8. But little care is taken of the utensils, weapons, canoes, &c., in daily use, and consequently new ones are often required, the old, when no longer serviceable, being thrown aside; as all their possessions consist of goods which need to be more or less frequently replaced, it is hardly necessary to explain that there is no accumulation of the labours of former generations; hence also it arises that they are not tied by any laws of inheritance: more as a matter of sentiment than for any other reason, the nearest of kin takes possession of all the effects left by a deceased person, and as often as not they are distributed ere long among such friends as may be in need of any of the articles in question.

422 9. The weapons, tools, and other property pertaining to one member of a family are regarded as available for the use of his or her relatives, but such articles as a cooking-pot, canoe, or sounding-board, when not required by the owner, are looked upon somewhat in the light of public property by members of the same community; in short, the rights of private property are only so far recognised that no one would without permission appropriate or remove to a distance anything belonging to a friend or neighbour.

000 **Agriculture.**—1. Before the arrival of strangers in their midst,

[1] *Vide post* "Games and Amusements," paragraph 37.

[2] Further mention of this will be made at "Games and Amusements," paragraph 24. As will there be explained, the occasions on which they usually barter are when they meet for a *jeg-* at some permanent encampment.

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Owing to the difficulty of pushing through the undergrowth the Onges always travel in single file, following closely behind one another, the men first, then the women and children, with the dogs following all round. They never travel alone; I hardly ever met any by themselves, but always in groups of families or groups of hunters. The man who happens to be at the front of the file is the guide and when they come to an awkward part of the journey – perhaps across a deep river – everybody helps. Trees are felled to fall across between the banks and a rope of lianas is run across to make the crossing easier for the aged, the women and the children, though their sense of balance is so good that most of them manage without it, even when carrying heavy loads across a single trunk.

The Onges are now nearly all related to each other in some way. They all know each other, and the contacts are usually friendly. The few squabbles which I saw, always over game, or food that had been gathered, all blew over very quickly; normally, especially in the dry season when every group becomes nomadic in search of food, everyone went freely all over the island. On the occasions of the great hunts, or the honey feasts, a number of groups would band together for the occasion and even then they tried to divide the spoils equally and peaceably. If a dispute does arise the camp will break up into factions, but these will still keep close to each other and after a short while their differences will be made up with the usual long and tearful embraces. These scenes of reconciliation may go on for days, all starting from nothing more serious than a difference of opinion over the division of game captured by communal effort!

Much more important than the danger of offending other human beings is that of causing offence to the spirits of the dead or the guardian spirits who provide food. There is, as I have said, not overmuch rigidity in their observations – no propitiatory offerings of any kind are made to the spirits. The supreme being, Eiuga, who takes the shape of a lizard bigger than a crocodile, they know well. On Great Andaman he becomes Puluga, equally powerful, lord of men and things but rather more anthropomorphic than his counterpart in Little Andaman. As Eiuga lives in the sky, the thunder is his voice, and the wind his breath; if he is angry he breathes out storms and throws burning tree-trunks down to the earth, setting light to the forest. Behind Eiuga are a series of minor spirits who